

The Banta Davis Task Force

Minutes

March 8, 2012

Present: John D. Williams, Board of Selectmen (BOS), Chair; W. Randall Brown, Carlisle Housing Authority; Grant Challenger, Vice-Chair, Community Representative; Greg D. Peterson, Chair, Affordable Housing Trust; Mary Storrs, Carlisle Public Schools.

Absent: Richard Amodei, Recreation Commission; Jonathan Stevens, Planning Board;

Guests: Alan Lehotsky, Chair, Carlisle Housing Authority; Joseph March, Stamski and McNary, Inc.; Cynthia Sorn, Carlisle Mosquito; Mary Zoll; Elizabeth D. Barnett, Housing Coordinator.

1. **Meeting Called to Order** at 7:38 am.
2. Approval of Minutes. Greg Peterson made a motion to approve and Grant Challenger seconded the motion. Four in favor. One abstention.

3. Old Business

Banta-Davis Site Evaluation – Engineering Consulting Services. Greg Peterson reported that Toby Kramer would be joining the Task Force at its next meeting. Mr. Peterson introduced Joseph March, of Stamski and McNary, Inc., and reviewed the firm's previous Carlisle engineering consulting work, including: the Police Station; the Fire Station; the Hanover Hills subdivision (private); the original Banta Davis site design; the tennis courts and the proposed Banta Davis Phase 2 (never built). Mr. Peterson reported that the firm was selected from proposals received from the three engineering services consulting firms which were invited to submit competitive proposal letters to John Williams, Task Force Chair.

Joseph March began by saying that Stamski and McNary planned to begin immediate work on a Banta Davis conceptual plan, which included the siting of the proposed housing units. The plan would show proposed parking, roadways and preliminary drainage systems. The firm planned to analyze the existing wastewater treatment plant and its capacity for up to 96 housing units and to meet with the Department of Environmental Protection to discuss permitting requirements for the wastewater treatment facility. The firm also would be investigating possible locations for the public water supply.

Mr. March distributed two images of multi-unit rental housing, and asked the Task Force for its input on building type. Mr. Challenger responded that the type of building selected would be essential, particularly if the decision was up to 60 units. Mr. March said that there are a range of options which would use more or less of the site, e.g., a 48-unit building, a six-unit building or somewhere in between. He noted that in his larger building example, the building had been designed in 16-unit segments. Mr. Challenger said that it might be helpful to run the affordable housing site capacity analysis up to 128 units, particularly to determine if this was possible from wastewater treatment and public water-supply perspective

Mr. Peterson asked Mr. March if he thought 120 housing units were a possibility for the site. Mr. March said yes. Mr. Peterson concurred with Mr. Challenger, that it would be helpful to know the maximum building capacity for the property, so that the Task Force might collectively begin to make a judgment about how much to develop on the on the property or consider making a conscious choice

not to maximize development. He noted that the public needs to become much more educated about the affordable housing pipeline, which is very preliminary, and is outlined in the 2010 Housing Production Plan (HPP).

Mr. Peterson pointed out that, if the Town chooses not to maximize Banta Davis development, then it may need to be looking at land to buy. He also added that if 128 units were to be built on the Banta Davis site, the Town would meet its Chapter 40B requirements or its 10% goal. In this scenario, the Town would additionally need to develop 15 to 20 units between the present and 2020, in order to remain its 10% after the 2020 U.S. Census.

W. Randall Brown observed that the 2010 HPP distributed the affordable housing pipeline throughout the Town. John Williams replied that the difficulties with small-scale development, were one of the reasons, the Task Force had wanted to hear from Toby Kramer. The Town had found it extremely difficult to receive Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) support for funding for smaller projects. Elizabeth D. Barnett, Housing Coordinator, added that, since the Town's initial 2005 HPP was approved by DHCD, the state and federal affordable housing financing landscape had changed drastically. This change has particularly reduced the available funding for smaller family rental projects, such as Westford's 15-unit Stoney Brook family rental development.

Mr. March went on to say that the biggest challenge for the Banta Davis housing project will be the well-siting. Mr. Peterson asked Mr. March to look what it would take to keep the entire public water supply Zone 1 on the property. He also asked Mr. March to analyze the DEP and other processes the Town will need to follow regarding joint use of the wastewater treatment facility and shared capital and operating costs, as the wastewater treatment facility is currently permitted through the School Committee. He also asked Mr. March to check whether the Banta Davis property is listed as an endangered species habitat.

Discussion continued on the maximum feasible housing development for the site, focusing on alternatives of under 60, 60 or 128 units. The point was raised that it was up to the Town to become educated on the number of affordable units, which made a project financially viable. It would be a waste of Town effort to develop a project which meets the Town's aesthetic, but cannot be funded. Alan Lehotsky, Chair of the Housing Authority, proposed developing a larger project, and permitting it in stages. John Williams pointed out that, if an unfriendly developer comes in under Chapter 40B, only the 25% of the units which are affordable count towards the Town's goal. Greg Peterson added that this would translate into 900 units if all privately developed under 40B.

Banta Davis Legal Questions. John Williams initiated the discussion by reporting that Town Counsel had said the Article 97 was not a problem for the Banta Davis property. The Town had purchased the property for the Department of Public Works, the Schools and the Cemetery. Town Counsel had outlined a three-step process. First, the School would need to vote that it did not need the Banta Davis property for expansion. Second, the Board of Selectmen would need to vote to change the land use for the property to affordable housing (this could be done for just the portion of the site required), and to deed the property to the Housing Authority. Finally, a 2/3 vote of Town Meeting to change the use of the property would be required. Mr. Williams he said that he planned to distribute Town Counsel's Legal Opinion to the Task Force at a later date. At a future meeting, the Task Force would then vote whether or not to make document public.

Mr. Williams also reported that he had heard from Gary Davis, Superintendent of Public Works, that Green Cemetery, adjacent to the Banta Davis property, had 65 plots, which were currently unsold, and 110 plots in an expansion area within the cemetery boundaries, totaling 175 plots. Mr. Davis

estimate was that this number would serve the Town out between 10 to 15 years. John Williams asked for clarification on the location of the expansion area for the Task Force and Mr. March.

Prior to adjourning the meeting, Mr. Williams said that it was important to reach out to Rich Amodei, from the Recreation Commission.

4. **New Business**

None. Ms. Toby Kramer had been scheduled to speak with the Task Force, but was unable to attend.

5. Next meeting: Thursday, March 22 at 7:30 pm.

Meeting adjourned: 8:41 am.

Documents discussed at this meeting:

Joseph March, Stamski and McNary, Inc. **Two color images of multi-unit rental housing.**

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth D. Barnett, Housing Coordinator